(c) As intimated by BALCO, the Company has 5266 regular employees as on 1.2.2008, out of which, 3582 are from the State of Chhattisgarh.

(d) After disinvestment and transfer of management control of BALCO in favour of a Strategic Partner (SP) on 2nd March, 2001, the appointment of requisite personnel in the Company comes within the purview of the SP. BALCO has informed that since disinvestment, BALCO has been giving preference to employment of candidates domiciled in the State on Chhattisgarh and to the wards of its employees. Besides, the Company also ensures that the contractors engaged by BALCO employ workers domiciled in the State of Chhattisgarh. BALCO has also intimated that it is ensuring that all terms and conditions contained in the environmental approvals are complied with.

Establishment of Equal Opportunity Commission

1006. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is going establish an Equal Opportunity Commission;

(b) if so, what would be the mandate of this Commission and what kind of activities would be performed by this Commision, and by when it is likely to be constituted;

(c) whether Government has decided about any deprivation index, to find out the kind of people who are deprived lot in the country;

(d) whether any expert committee has submitted any report in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) whether Sachar Committee's recommendations were also taken into consideration and if so, the details in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A. R. ANTULAY): (a) to (f) The Sachar Committee had recommended that an Equal Opportunity Commission should be constituted to look into the grievances of deprived groups. An Expert Group was set up in August, 2007 to examine the structure and functions of such a commission. It is scheduled to submit its report shortly.

Education and loan facilities to minorities and backward communities

1007. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has evolved a strategy to ensure better education and loan facilities to minority and backwards communities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the basis on which Government has distinguished between minority and backward community status; and

(d) the achievements made, so far by Government in this regards?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A. R. ANTULAY): (a), (b) and (d) A statement, regarding the decision taken on the recommendations of the Sachar Committee, has been laid on the Table of the House on 31.8.2007 which contains details of the

multi-pronged strategy for addressing the problems of educational backwardness of the Muslim community and for improving the access to credit for minorities. The statement is also available on the Ministry of Minority Affairs website *www.minorityaffairs.gov.in.*

(c) Five communities have been notified as minorities under section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992. Other backward classes who are socially and economically backward, are notified by State and Central Government.

Consideration of *Dalit* Muslims in SC/ST categories

1008. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any recommendations from the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities to the effect that *dalit* Muslims should be considered as belonging to the SC/ST categories; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A. R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) The recommendations of the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities (NCRLM) are under consideration.

Percentage of Muslims in Government services

1009: SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the percentage of Muslims employed in Government services, and specially in the judiciary is far below their share in the population, as per the data compiled by the Sachar Commission to look into the status of the Muslims in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof in each State; and

(c) the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) The report of the Sachar Committee was laid on the Table of the House on 30.11.2006. Chapter 9 of the report contains information on employment of Muslims in Government and in the judiciary. The report is also available on the Ministry of Minority Affairs website *www.minorityaffairs.gov.in.* A number of decision have been taken, as detailed in the Statement on the follow-up action on the recommendations of the Sachar Committee, laid on the Table of the House on 31.8.2007, to improve the educational status of Muslims and improve the representation of minorities in services.

Recommendations of Sachar Committee

1010. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has prepared a blue print to implement the recommendations of Sachar Committee;